

THE MAYOR'S COMMITTEE FOR VETERANS AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF THE 6/26/12 MEETING

The Meeting convened at 1:00pm at the Gashes Creek Road Recreation Division Office.

Those attending: Mary Albert, Jan Banks, Allison Bond, Debra Collington, Karl Katterjohn, Ron Kennedy, Josh O'Conner, Michael Reich, Gayle Sovinee, Ken Vasilik
Guests: Alyce Knafllich, Larry Fowler, Johanna Stebbins

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Introductions were made by the attendees.

Motion made, seconded and passed that the May meeting minutes be accepted.

Treasurer's Report: Ron Kennedy reported there were no additional expenditures nor income from the May report and the balance remains at \$346.00. Gayle reported that there is a planned, expenditure for batteries at the Bele Chere event estimated at \$20.00. A motion was made, seconded and passed to accept that planned expense. Josh reminded that our new fiscal year budget will begin on July 1st.

Guest Introduction: Larry Fowler was attending as a representative of the Buncombe County Veterans Council and American Legion Post 2.

Old Business

Memorial Day Recap: All who participated and attended felt that the ceremony went very well. Parks and Rec did a good job in setting up for the ceremony together with Sandra Travis' yeoman-service in preparations. The County's PR efforts were noteworthy. Vice Chairman of the County Commissioners, Bill Stanley was especially gratified by the Committee's certificate presented to him. The Veterans Quarters sound system was a "life-saver" and worked very well.

Was noted that additional time should be spent just prior to the ceremony to go over the script/sequence-of-events with the Master-of-Ceremony.

Committee Restructuring Update: Josh related that he presented the scope of the restructuring to the County Boards and Commission Committee with an overall favorable reaction. Some editorial modifications were suggested. On July 24th, Josh will be making a similar presentation to City Council as a new-business-agenda item. He asked for committee member attendance. The presentation would probably take place later in the Council's session.

It was brought up by Alyce Knafllich and Larry Fowler if the Buncombe County Veterans Council would in some way work with the restructured committee/board. A copy of the

Council's by-laws was provided. Josh allowed as there was no direct relationship developed at this time, but would review the matter.

Bele Chere: Gayle advised that she has resigned as the Executive Director of Helios Warriors and her contact phone # is now: 828-450-0979.

Gayle advised logistics and facilities arrangement are going well for the committee's participation in Bele Chere weekend, July 27-29. Brian Eubanks and the ABCCM Vets Qtrs are assisting. There are still several time-slots to be filled by volunteers and Gayle asked for that assistance. Josh will be providing committee name tags. Gayle also advised that service organizations' promotional materials have been reviewed and appear to be appropriate and up-to-date. Mr. Patrick McKinsey the VA's OEF/OIF rep will be there. Area education institutions are to be contacted to provide materials appropriate for veterans.

There was some discussion on the committee's continuing participation in Bele Chere especially as it pertains to the effectiveness of service to the veterans' community. Josh would like to be able to measure and assess the activity and topics/needs of the booth drop-in's. Booth volunteers were asked to record these. This should also assist in our orienting and targeting our focusing on realistic veterans' needs.

Job Opportunities: Josh has received information from the VA and will assimilate that into opportunities for our area veterans.

New Business

Veterans Day Ceremony: A motion was made, seconded and passed to have Josh request approval from City Council for our committee with the assistance of the Parks & Rec Dept. to develop and present an appropriate ceremony for this year's Veterans Day observance.

Veterans Retraining Program: Mary Albert advised of a federal program by the Dept of Labor, under the Montgomery GI Bill, to provide a monthly monetary stipend (\$473) for veterans attending schools under various degree programs.

VA Stand-Down: Allison Bond advised of a 1-day event on December 1st (9:00am - 12:00pm) for homeless veterans. It will be held at the Stevens-Lee Rec Center and will include numerous service organizations. Allison is looking for volunteers to assist at the event which last year brought in some 200 veterans.

Andy Clark has requested resignation from the committee due to other commitments. He intends to be involved in some of the committee's events.

Upcoming Events

Connestee Falls Fishing Club is sponsoring a Military Kids Fishing Trip at Connestee Falls on Monday, August 6th starting at 9:00am. Learn how to fish! Poles and worms provided. Must have 1 adult family member in attendance with the child or family of children. Call 828-885-7895.

The Edward Jones financial management company is having a Financial Advisor Career Development Seminar on Tuesday, July 10 from 5:30pm to 7:30pm at the Hilton Asheville Biltmore Park. Register at NCcareers@edwardjones.com or visit www.edwardjones.com/asheville. Registration ends July 9th.

Michael Reich advised the ABCCM and the American Legion Post at the Vets Qrts is sponsoring some of the festivities at the July 4th Asheville Tourists' game. Game time is 7pm.

Larry Fowler advised of American Legion Post 2's Used American Flags Disposal Ceremony on July 10th starting at 5:30pm at the Post's location in West Asheville (851 Haywood Rd).

Meeting was adjourned at 2:00pm.

Next meeting is scheduled for July 24th at 1:00pm at the Recreation Division Office on Gashes Creek Rd.